



Views Of 'Unchurched' Adults On Joining The Catholic Church

PRINCETON, N.J. — The one-third of Americans who are "unchurched" say their main reasons for joining (or rejoining) the Roman Catholic Church, if they were actively considering such an option, would be: a common ground of belief in God; the sense of family one gains in the Catholic Church; Catholic relatives and friends; and support for the Church's position that marriage is lifelong.

For this survey, the "unchurched" are defined as those who have worshiped less than twice in the church or synagogue of their choice, or who do not presently have a church or synagogue.

These are the top four reasons given from a list of 45 items included in a new survey conducted for the Paulist National Evangelistic Association that explored the reasons unchurched Americans would give for joining (or not joining) the Roman Catholic Church. The 45 items cover six areas: teachings, people, beliefs, programs, structures, and worship.

All "unchurched" survey respondents were asked this question:

Suppose you were considering joining (or rejoining) the Catholic Church. Which three items on this list would be the major reasons you WOULD consider joining the Catholic Church?

Here are the top 10 responses:

MAJOR REASONS FOR JOINING CHURCH (Based on "unchurched")

1. God exists and is the Creator of everything. . . . 22%
2. Sense of family: emotional and moral support among Catholics 20
3. Catholic relatives, friends or neighbors. 18
4. Marriage is lifelong. 14
5. Jesus Christ is both true God and true man. . . . 8
6. Jesus Christ is alive today, and is Lord and Saviour of all people 8
7. Human life is sacred. 7
8. Religious instruction for children and youth. . . 7

9. There is a heaven and hell, and all people will eventually go to one or the other. 6
10. People and nations are required to work sincerely for peace 6

REASONS WOULD NOT JOIN (OR REJOIN)

The "unchurched" were also asked:

What three items on this list would be the major reasons you WOULD NOT consider joining (or rejoining) the Catholic Church?

The top four responses given by this group are: the Church's position that the use of mechanical and chemical means to limit birth is wrong; the Church's position that abortion is wrong; the use of money by Catholic churches; and the authority of the Pope.

Here are the top 10 responses:

MAJOR REASONS FOR NOT JOINING CHURCH

(Based on "unchurched")

1. The use of mechanical and chemical means to limit birth is wrong 21%
2. Abortion is wrong 20
3. Catholic Church and use of money 16
4. Pope as universal shepherd of all Catholics . . . 12
5. Statues, rosary, incense, holy water, candles, medals, etc. 10
6. Sex outside marriage is wrong 9
7. Marriage is lifelong. 9
8. The Church has the right to teach on controversial religious matters 7
9. Church buildings 7
10. Devotion to Mary and the saints. 6

The survey also shows that of the 13% of the unchurched who once belonged to the Catholic Church, four in 10 say they have thought of rejoining the Church. The six in 10 who have *not* thought of rejoining give the following reasons (from a list of 13 items):

REASONS FOR NOT REJOINING CHURCH

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Cannot accept some of the Church's teachings . | 62% |
| 2. Factors related to priests. | 15 |
| Uncomfortable about going to a priest. . | 7% |
| Felt priest would not be responsive. . . | 5 |
| Did consider rejoining but was turned away by a priest. | 3 |
| 3. Catholic way of life is too demanding | 14 |
| 4. The whole procedure of joining the Catholic Church is too complicated. | 7 |
| 5. I am divorced and remarried, and therefore cannot join the Catholic Church. | 7 |
| 6. I was too lazy | 6 |
| 7. Never invited by a Catholic to come | 2 |
| 8. Felt the Church would not want me because of my messed up life | 2 |
| 9. No church nearby | 1 |
| 10. Didn't know how to go about it. | * |
| 11. Serious family objections | * |
| None of these reasons. | 9 |
| No opinion. | 12 |
| | 137%** |

*Less than one percent

**Adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses

These are among the highlights of the study, conducted in January and February, in which 3,050 adults were interviewed in person in more than 300 sampling locations across the nation.

For further information about the study, contact: The Reverend Alvin A. Illig, Director, The Paulist National Evangelistic Association, 3031 Fourth Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017.

CLOSE VOTE SEEN ON TAX CREDITS, BUT CATHOLICS 2-TO-1 IN FAVOR

The American people as a whole are closely divided on the question of tuition tax credits for children attending private or parochial schools, with 50% in favor and 45% opposed.

Among the 28% in the nation who are Catholics, however, opinion is 2-to-1 favor, 65% to 31%. Among Protestants, the vote is 46% in favor and 49% opposed.

These findings are from a Gallup survey conducted September 28-October 1, in which 1,590 adults were interviewed in person.

CONFIDENCE IN CHURCH SEEN ON DECLINE IN CANADA

Over the past five years, there appears to have been a small decline in overall confidence towards the church among the Canadian people - - from 60% who expressed "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in 1979 to 54% in the latest Gallup survey.

By way of comparison, 64% of Americans express a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the church or organized religion - - 10 points higher than the current Canadian figure.

Some of the other groups tested in the Canadian survey have fared as badly, or worse. Confidence in the House of Commons has dropped from 38% to 29%; in political parties from 30% to 22%; and in large corporations from 34% to 28%.

NONE HAS INCREASED CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Of the eight institutions studied, none has managed to increase its level of confidence among the general public to a significant extent.

The survey results are based on 1,047 personal, in-home interviews with adults, 18 and over, conducted in November. A sample of this size is accurate within a four percentage point margin 95% of the time.

THE QUESTION AND RESULTS

Would you tell me how much respect and confidence you, yourself, have in (name of group) - a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?

The latest results and comparison with those from a 1979 survey:

CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS

Church, organized religion 1984

Great deal, quite a lot	54%
Some	30
Very little	15
No opinion.	1
	100%

1979

Great deal, quite a lot	60%
Some	27
Very little	12
No opinion.	1
	100%

One-Tenth Of Americans Seen As 'Highly Spiritually Committed'

One-tenth of Americans (10%) fall into the category of "highly spiritually committed" according to a scale developed by the Princeton Religion Research Center and included in a survey conducted for The Christian Broadcasting Network, "24 Hours in the Religious and Spiritual Life of America."

The scale, a slightly expanded version of an earlier scale developed by the PRRC, measures the levels of spiritual commitment in U.S. society. Survey respondents were asked whether they feel each of nine statements is completely true, mostly true, mostly untrue, or completely untrue.

The scale does not include religious involvement or participation items, since these do not necessarily measure spiritual commitment, but determines the proportion of the adult population who say they believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ; believe God loves them; wish their religious faith were stronger; believe in the full authority of the Bible; try hard to put their religious beliefs into practice; receive comfort and support from their religious beliefs; seek God's will through prayer; say their religious faith is the most

important influence in their lives; and, finally, say that they "sometimes do things they want very much NOT to do because they believe it is the will of God."

To be considered "highly spiritually committed," survey respondent must answer "completely true" to all nine statements. A total of 10% of the sample did so.

The results show a disproportionate number of women and persons with less than college training are "highly spiritually committed."

It is important to bear in mind that the findings refer only to those in the sample who give their broad religious preference as Christian, since there are too few non-Christians in the sample to provide projectible data.

Here is the question asked in the 1984 survey for CBN in which a total of 1,610 adults were interviewed in person in more than 300 scientifically-elected localities across the nation:

Please tell me for each of the following statements if you feel it is completely true, mostly true, mostly untrue or completely untrue?

The national results are shown below.

SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT SCALE

	Completely true %	Mostly true %	Mostly untrue %	Completely untrue %	No opinion %
I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ	69	19	3	5	4
I believe that God loves me even though I may not always please Him	68	21	3	4	4
I wish my religious faith were stronger.	51	27	11	8	3
I believe in the full authority of the Bible	51	26	9	9	5
I try hard to put my religious beliefs into practice in my relations with all people, including people of different races, religious attitudes, and backgrounds.	49	35	7	5	4
I receive a great deal of comfort and support from my religious beliefs.	46	32	11	7	4
I constantly seek God's will through prayer	36	31	19	11	3
My religious faith is the most important influence in my life . .	34	38	17	8	3
I sometimes do things I want very much NOT to do because I be- lieve it is the will of God.	23	26	19	23	9

Teenagers' Views On Careers

When choosing a career, teenagers feel that it's important to have a job that will allow them to spend a lot of time with their families, according to a recent Gallup/Associated Press Youth Survey.

In answer to some social critics who believe the computer generation of young people is living in isolation, teens consider working alone the least important factor in career selection.

Two in three teens (66 percent) say it is very important to have a job that would allow them to spend a lot of time with their family, and an additional 27 percent say this would be somewhat important to them. Family time would be considered unimportant in only 6 percent.

Overall, the chance to earn high income is very important to 54 percent, and somewhat important to 37 percent of the teens. High income, however, is very important to only 46 percent of the teens who say they are doing above-average work in school, and drops to 44 percent of the young women interviewed.

Having a job that would afford the opportunity to meet many new people is considered very important by a majority of teens (52 percent). Young women are more interested in public contact than are young men, by a margin of 56 percent to 47 percent.

Being able to help disadvantaged people through their work is considered a very important factor by 49 percent of the teens. Concern for the less fortunate is strongest among black teens (60 percent) and young women (54 percent).

A chance to work with their hands would be very important to 38 percent of the teens, but only 22 percent say it would be very important to them to work out of doors.

A job that requires continuing study and education is very appealing to about one teen in three (35 percent) and of secondary importance to the 40 percent who say it is "somewhat" important. Similar proportions say that a job in high technology is very important (34 percent) or somewhat important (37 percent). Interest rises among above-average students, with a high technology career considered very important by 41 percent, and the chance for continuing education by 39 percent.

A chance to travel a lot on the job is considered very important by only 29 percent of the teens, but may be considered a secondary benefit by 45 percent, who rate travel opportunities as being somewhat important.

Of least importance of the factors tested is a job that would enable one to work alone a lot. Only 13 percent rate job solitude as very important. It is considered somewhat important by 38 percent, but a near majority of 48 percent say working alone is unimportant to them.

Three teens in 10 (31 percent) say they would prefer to work for a private firm or in professional practice.

About the same proportion (28 percent) would prefer

a large company as their place of employment, and about half as many would like to work for a small firm (15 percent).

Employment with a non-profit organization or college appeals to about one teen in 10 (12 percent), but is of greater interest to young women (15 percent) than to young men (8 percent). A civil service career interests 10 percent of the teens, while 6 percent would prefer employment in the armed services.

The questions were asked by first giving teens a list of types of organizations and asking, *If you had a choice, for which one of the following types of organizations would you like to work?*

They were then read a list of career characteristics and asked, *In choosing a career, how important would each of the following be to you - very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, or very unimportant?*

The findings reported today are based on telephone interviews with a representative national cross section of 504 teenagers, 13 through 18, conducted from April to June 1984.

IMPORTANT FACTORS IN CAREER CHOICE

	Very important %	Somewhat important %	Unimportant %
Able to spend time with family	66	27	6
High income	54	37	8
Meet many new people	52	37	11
Help disadvantaged people	49	40	11
Work with hands . .	38	39	22
Requires continuing study and education	35	40	23
High technology . .	34	37	27
Chance to travel a lot	29	45	25
Work outdoors . . .	22	39	37
Work alone a lot . .	13	38	48

No opinion (1 to 2%) omitted

PREFERRED WORKING ENVIRONMENT

	National %	Male %	Female %
Private or pro- fessional practice . .	31	29	34
Large company	28	30	27
Small company	15	16	14
Non-profit organiza- tion or college	12	8	15
Government	10	10	11
Armed services	6	7	5

Note: Columns add to more than 100 percent because some respondents named more than one type of organization.

Some Of The Most Interesting Findings From E. T. - 1979 To 1985

Over the last six years *Emerging Trends* has covered a wide variety of topics. Some of the most interesting – and surprising – findings include the following:

- 8 in 10 Americans say they are Christians but only 4 in 10 know who delivered the Sermon on the Mount.
 - 62% of Americans have no doubt that Jesus Christ will return to earth someday.
 - 23% of U.S. adults (many of whom regularly attend religious services) believe in astrology.
 - Religious television shows do not drain people and money from local churches.
 - Two-thirds of Americans think their chances of going to heaven are good.
 - Jesus Christ is fifth on a list of teenagers of the greatest persons in history.
 - 93% of college students say there is no chance that they would join a cult, such as the Moonies.
- ————— •
- Little difference is found in the ethical views and behavior of those who go to church and those who don't when it comes to lying, cheating, pilferage and non-reporting of theft.
 - Few Americans (4%) report that the clergy of the church or synagogue they attend urged them to vote for a particular presidential candidate or a particular political party during last year's presidential campaign.
 - Nearly half of all U.S. adults believe in creationism – that is, that all living creatures were brought into being within the last 10,000 years.
 - 3 in 10 teenagers (and two in 10 among regular teenage churchgoers) do not know the significance of Easter for Christians.
 - Most Americans think the Ten Commandments are valid rules for living, but many have a tough time recalling exactly what those rules are.
 - 51% would not vote for an atheist for president.
 - One-third of church members believe a homosexual cannot be a good Christian or Jew.

BIBLE OR DEVOTIONAL READING WITHIN LAST 12 MONTHS

	U.S. public %	Bible/ devotional readers %
Within last 12 months:		
Once	1	3
2-4 times	2	7
5-10 times	2	6
About once a month	2	6
About 2 or 3 times a month	3	8
About once a week	5	18
About 2 or 3 times a week	3	10
About 4 or 5 times a week	2	6
Almost every day	5	16
Every day	6	19
Not sure	*	1
	31%	100%

*less than 1%.

The results are based on in-person interviews with 1,509 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period November 7-10.

For results based on samples of this size, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction.

INTERESTED IN CONDUCTING A SURVEY OF YOUR CHURCH?

A growing number of priests, ministers and rabbis have expressed interest in conducting surveys of their congregations and/or local communities.

If you share this interest and would like expert help and advice, we suggest you contact Russell D. Bredholt, Continental Research Associates, 1153 Winged Foot Circle, Winter Springs, Florida 32708. Telephone: (305) 365-4321. Continental Research Associates is affiliated with the Princeton Religion Research Center.



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Prayer In American Life

PRINCETON, N.J. — A remarkable nine in 10 Americans say they pray, the same proportion recorded in regular surveys taken over the last four decades. Ever among U.S. adults who are "unchurched," as many as three in four say they pray.

The prayers offered range from an occasional prayer in emergencies, to short prayers during the day, to grace before meals, to deep and lengthy prayer and meditation.

Prayer appears to play a greater part in the lives of Americans than it does in other nations, as indicated by a 1981 survey conducted by Gallup International Research Institutes (GIRI) for Applied Research in the Apostolate and the European Value System Study Group. The survey shows 85% of Americans "take some moments of prayer, meditation, or contemplation" — a higher figure than recorded in the 13 other nations tested, as seen in the table below:

Here is the question:

Do you take some moments of prayer, meditation or contemplation, or something like that?

PRAYER, MEDITATION, CONTEMPLATION

	Yes %	No %	Don't know %
United States	85	14	1
Republic of Ireland	81	18	1
Northern Ireland	73	25	1
Italy	72	26	2
Spain	69	27	4
Norway	61	38	1
West Germany	59	29	12
Belgium	56	32	12
Netherlands	56	36	8
Great Britain	50	50	—
Finland	49	42	10
Denmark	48	50	2
France	44	54	2
Sweden	33	66	2

NOTE: Some rows do not add to 100% because of rounding.

PRAYER VIEWED AS
'VERY IMPORTANT'

Further evidence that prayer plays a major role in the lives of many Americans is seen by survey results that show 60% saying prayer is "very important" to them, while another 22% say "fairly important." Only 15% say prayer is "not very" or "not at all important" in their lives.

In addition, of 17 items tested, "praying alone" is named most often as something people do to nourish or strengthen their faith.

A total of 55% say prayer is "absolutely necessary for someone to truly know God."

FREQUENCY OF PRAYER
HAS DECLINED

While the percentage of Americans who pray at least occasionally has been remarkably stable in surveys since 1948, sharp swings have occurred in the frequency of praying.

For example, the proportion who pray twice a day or more, on the average, declined from 42% in 1952 to 27% in 1978. Since then, however, praying twice or more daily has shown a slight increase to 31%.

Paralleling the downtrend in frequency of prayer has been a decline in the percentage of Americans who say grace out loud before family meals — from 69% in 1962 to 57% in 1979.

Here are the questions and trends:

Do you ever pray to God?

EVER PRAY TO GOD?

	%
1985	87
1982	88
1978	89
1965	92
1952	92
1948	90*

*Question asked in 1948 survey: *Do you ever pray?*

PRAY TWICE A DAY OR MORE

(Based on those who pray)

	%
1985	31
1982	30
1978	27
1965	41
1952	42

Surprisingly little difference is found among population groups in the proportions who ever pray. Some differences emerge, however, among those who pray *three times a day* or more. While the overall national figure for this group is 19%, the percentages for women, older persons, blacks and Protestants are higher, as shown in the table:

PRAY THREE TIMES A DAY OR MORE

(Based on those who pray)

	%
National	19
Men	14
Women	23
18-24 years	12
25-29 years	24
30-49 years	18
50-64 years	18
65 & older	24
Whites	18
Blacks	23
Hispanics	13
College graduates	22
College incomplete	16
High school graduates	20
Less than H.S. graduates	19
Catholics	14
Protestants	22
All Baptists	23
Southern Baptists	32
Methodists	14

PRAYER—KEY TO SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Because many religious observers believe that the best indicator of the spiritual health of a nation is the quality of its prayer life, it is vital to explore this area through surveys.

Much further study needs to be undertaken on the nature and depth of prayer and its impact on our lives. However, recent surveys conducted by The Gallup Organization and the Princeton Religion Research Center have shed light on this all-important dimension of our spiritual lives.

The figures in this article are based on regular Gallup Polls and special studies sponsored by the Robert Schuller Ministries, the Christian Broadcasting Network, the Catholic Digest, as well as a study, *The Unchurched American*, sponsored by a wide range of denominations convened by the National Council of Churches in Christ to explore the beliefs, values, and life-styles of persons who are presently not active members of a church.

Following are key questions asked about the prayer life of Americans and survey findings that help answer these questions:

1. *In what ways do people pray?* Most say "privately by themselves," followed by "during a worship service," and "with members of the family at meals." One in seven (15%) says he or she "prays constantly." Here are the full results based on *The Unchurched American* survey, in which respondents were asked about the ways they had prayed during a 30-day period in 1978.

WAYS PEOPLE PRAY

(Based on those who pray)

	%
Privately by themselves	86
During a worship service	48
With members of their family at meals	35
With other members of their family other than at meals or church services	16
As a regular part of some group they now belong to (other than at a worship service)	16
Constantly—prayer is their life	15
Other responses	11

2. *How many are involved in prayer or meditation groups?* One in six (17%) in a 1983 survey said he or she was so involved. The comparable figure in 1981 was 14%.

Most likely to be involved are women (20%), persons 50-64 years old (22%) and Protestants (22%).

The Unchurched American showed that 8% of Americans practice specific techniques of meditation, such as those taught in Transcendental Meditation, Zen, Divine Light Mission, or other techniques.

3. *What do people pray about or for?* In a 1982 survey for the Christian Broadcasting Network, persons who said they prayed alone during the 24-hour period tested were asked what they prayed about or for. Here are the results:

SUBJECT OF PRAYERS

(Based on those who prayed alone)

	%
Health or healing for family, friends	22
Guidance, help	19
Family	15

Thanksgiving	12
General prayer	7
People, friends	6
Safety of family, friends	6
World peace	6
Self-improvement	5
Nation	3
Employment	3
Strength	3
Forgiveness	2
God's blessing	2
Church	1
All other	2
Don't know/no answer	20
	134%*

In a 1965 survey conducted for the Catholic Digest a similar question was asked, with these results:

REASONS PEOPLE PRAY

	%
To ask God for favors, help, guidance, strength	47
Belief in prayer, faith, belief in God	19
To give thanks	18
To get a feeling of comfort or confidence while praying	11
Habit or training	7
To ask forgiveness	3
For salvation of soul; to go to heaven	1
All other	3
Don't know/no answer	—
	109%*

4. *When do people pray?* About one-third of Americans (36%) prayed in the evening or night (of those who said they prayed alone during a 24-hour period tested). Another third (31%) said they prayed in the morning. Here are the full results:

WHEN PEOPLE PRAY

(Based on those who prayed alone)

	%
Evening, night	32
Morning	31
Before bedtime	22
During the day	13
Afternoon	8
Late at night	5
Before meals	4
During church, Mass, at prayer meetings	1
All other	2
Don't know/no answer	10
	132%*

*Totals adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

5. *Do people say set prayers on a regular basis?* Of persons who prayed alone during a 24-hour period, 26% responded they said a set prayer on a regular basis, while 56% said they did not. The remaining 18% did not characterize their prayers on this basis.

6. *Do people pray to God, to Jesus or to both?* Two in three (67%) pray to both God and Jesus, according to a survey conducted in 1982 for the Robert Schuller Ministries.

PRAY TO GOD, JESUS OR BOTH?

	%
God	26
Jesus	4
Both	67
Neither	1
Don't know/no answer	2
	100%

7. *How long do people spend in prayer?* Those who prayed alone during a 24-hour period were asked how long they spent praying. Of those who were able to make an estimate, about one-fourth (24%) said under 5 minutes, while 39% said between 5 and 15 minutes, and 37% said more than 15 minutes. Included were silent or thought prayers, grace and bedtime prayers.

8. *How does prayer affect thoughts or actions?* Most say "it makes me feel good" and "gives me peace of mind," as determined in the survey for CBN. Here are the full results, based on those who said they prayed alone during a 24-hour period:

EFFECTS OF PRAYER

(Based on those who prayed alone)

	%
Makes me feel good	21
Gives me peace of mind, calm	16
Relaxes, gives relief	8
Makes me feel confident, secure	7
Helps me be a better person	5
Lifts spirits, inspires	4
Gives comfort	3
Makes me treat others better	3
Prepares me to meet day	3
Gives feeling of satisfaction, contentment	2
It helps, works	2
Helps me sleep better	2
Gives guidance	1
Replaces evil thoughts	1
Promotes self-searching	1
Makes me thankful	1
Has no effect	4
Don't know/no answer	28
	115%*

*Adds to more than 100% due to multiple responses.

9. *Will people who pray be helped?* Three in four (76%) in a CBN survey answer affirmatively. Most likely to hold this view are women, non-whites and elderly persons.

10. *How many have received help?* An impressive 84% of the above group say they have received help.

11. *In what ways are people helped?* The same survey shows that:

- 82% became calmer
- 72% report their attitude was changed in some way
- 52% took some action as a result of having prayed
- 43% felt God showed them clearly what to do
- 40% felt transformed - that is, "like new persons"

If one is a religionist, one cannot help but be impressed by the survey finding that as many as nine in 10 Americans continue to seek a power outside themselves for guidance for their lives.

It also should be noted that for most Americans, prayer is important in their lives. They believe in the power of prayer and believe their prayers are answered.

Furthermore, Americans want their faith to grow and at least one in five (19%) feels the churches could better serve them by helping them deepen their prayer lives.

While these findings may be encouraging, it should also be noted that surveys give clear evidence that our prayer life appears to be underdeveloped and undernourished.

Harvey Cox has said: "The failure of most churches actually to teach people how to pray, and the difficulties involved in learning the difference between reading, studying and meditation on a text, have produced a generation of Protestants who have practically no spiritual discipline at all."

PRAYERS SAID TO 'FEEL GOOD'

It would appear that prayers are often said primarily to "feel good," without full attention given to the eight successive moods of prayer that have been described as adoration, thanksgiving, confession, submission, petition, intercession, commitment and communion.

There are encouraging signs. The frequency of praying appears to be on an uptrend after a long and steep slide. A growth is noted in those participating in prayer and meditation groups and in small fellowship groups. In an article in the *New York Times Magazine* (Nov. 18, 1984), titled *America's Return to Prayer*, religion editor Kenneth A. Briggs writes of "... burgeoning numbers of retreat houses and spiritual centers of various faiths."

Still there is a long way to go. Only about one person in seven says he or she prays constantly or tries to "live a life of prayer," which could be regarded as the ultimate goal of a religious person.

Yet most Americans would likely agree readily with Edgar Jackson who wrote in his book *Understanding Prayer* that prayer is "a largely undiscovered resource of mankind."

FOCUS ON YOUTH

HALF OF TEENAGERS ATTEND CHURCH WEEKLY

One teenager in every two (51%) attended church or synagogue in a typical week during 1984, according to the Gallup Youth Survey about the same level as recorded in six earlier surveys conducted since June, 1977.

Following is the question asked of a total of 1506 teenagers, 13 through 18, at three points in time during 1984:

Did you happen to attend church or synagogue in the last 7 days, or not?

Following is the trend, revealing little statistical change in attendance between surveys. The surveys prior to the 1984 surveys were conducted at a single point in time.

ATTENDED CHURCH/SYNAGOGUE

1984 (3 surveys, averaged)	51%
October 1981	49
November 1980	51
April 1980	50
May 1979	49
March 1978	50
June 1977	47

Churchgoing is highest among younger teens, girls, Catholics, Southerners, and those whose academic standing is above average.

The rate of churchgoing among teenagers is higher than that of adults, 18 and older. The latest Gallup Poll audit shows that 40% of adults nationwide attended church or synagogue in a typical week of 1984.

INTERESTED IN CONDUCTING A SURVEY IN YOUR CHURCH?

A growing number of priests, ministers, and rabbis have expressed interest in conducting surveys of their congregations and/or local communities.

If you share this interest and would like expert help and advise, we suggest you contact Russell D. Bredholt, Continental Research Associates, 1385 Yellow Pine Court, Winter Springs, Florida 32708. Telephone: (305) 365-4321. Continental Research Associates is affiliated with the Princeton Religion Research Center.

Teenagers' Religious Experiences Vary Greatly

Most teenagers believe there is a God, but the ways in which that belief is practiced and influences their lives can vary greatly, according to results obtained from a number of Gallup Youth Surveys conducted over the past seven years.

Asked in general if they believe in a God or a universal spirit, 95% of all teenagers say they do, but only three in four (75%) go so far as to say they believe in what theologians term a "personal" God — that is, one who observes and rewards or punishes people for their actions.

A majority of teens (57%) believe there is life after death, but fewer (27%) accept the eastern religious concept of reincarnation, that the soul does not go to a heaven or hell but passes on to live in another being. In 1984, seven teens in 10 (69%) reported they believe in angels, up 5 percentage-points from 1978 when 64% stated belief in the divine messengers.

9 IN 10 TEENS OFFER PRAYERS

Nearly nine teens in 10 (87%) say they have prayed to the deity in whom they believe. Among those who do pray, 39% report that they pray frequently, 36% say their prayers are offered only occasionally, and 12% say praying is something they seldom do. Young women are almost twice as likely as young men to say they pray frequently, by a margin of 49% to 27%.

A majority of teens (51%) consider religious faith a very important personal quality.

The teens' elders often express concern about declining church attendance and religious values of the young, but eight years of polling by the Gallup Youth Survey has demonstrated that the religious practices and beliefs of teenagers have been remarkably consistent over time.

40% SAY RELIGION 'VERY IMPORTANT'

For example, over the years Gallup has found that four in 10 (40%) rate religion as a very important influence in their lives, 41% say it is a fairly important factor, and just 19% say it is not too important or not at all important. Asked another way, 22% say religion is the most important influence in their lives, and 20% list it as one of the most important.

Beliefs and prayer, however, do not always translate into church attendance or acceptance of formal religious affiliation among teenagers. Only one teen in four (25%) expresses high confidence in organized religion. Eight teens in 10 (80%) believe that people can live devout and moral lives without the benefit of church attendance.

Seven teens in 10 do report formal church membership. According to affiliation, which does not always denote attendance, a majority of teens (50%) say they are

Protestants, while 38% are Roman Catholics, and 6% state other preferences. Only 6% of the teens state no religious preference of affiliation. The proportion of teenage Protestants is lower than found in the adult population (57%), but the proportion of Catholic teens is higher than found among adults (29%).

A near majority of teens (49%) say they read the Bible at least monthly. Daily reading is reported by 12%, at least weekly by 24%, and at least monthly by 13%. (It should be noted that in some instances Bible reading may include group recitation at services, and does not necessarily represent independent reading on the initiative of the teenagers.) Of the remaining teens, 21% say they read the Bible less than monthly, and 30% say they have either never read the Bible or cannot remember when they last read it.

MANY NON-ATTENDERS READ BIBLE MONTHLY

As would be expected, regular teen church attenders (70%) are more likely to report reading the Bible with some frequency, but it is interesting to note that 29% of those who do not attend church regularly say they read the Bible independently at least monthly. Since many Protestant denominations place great emphasis upon individual Bible study, it is not surprising to find that frequent Bible reading is found more often among Protestant youth (58%) than among Catholics (38%).

About four teens in 10 (43%) say they are now receiving formal religious training by attending classes or study groups on religion. Participation in formal instruction drops, however, from 51% among younger teens, 13 to 15, to 36% among those who are 16 or older. Teens themselves suggest that 16 is the age by which young people, without parental guidance, should be able to decide whether or not they should go to church or participate in church-related activities.

1 IN 5 REPORTS 'BORN AGAIN' EXPERIENCE

Very serious religious commitment is noted among one teenager in five (19%) who reports a "born-again" experience. A career in religion has been given serious consideration by 7% of all teens, and 11% report they have given a religious vocation at least passing consideration.

Perhaps as a result of their reading and study, eight teens in 10 (79%) believe the Ten Commandments are still valid rules for living today. But only 35% of the teens can name five or more of the Commandments.

The results represent the findings from at least 2,000 interviews conducted each year between 1977 and 1984 by the Gallup Youth Survey among representative nationwide samples of teenagers, ages 13 through 18.

'Religion In America, 1985' Report To Highlight 50 Years Of Trends

This year the Gallup Poll celebrates 50 years of measuring public opinion on key political, economic, social and religious trends in the United States. The new Gallup RELIGION IN AMERICA, 1985 report will highlight trends of the last half century in religious beliefs and practices, as well as long-term trends in views on the impact of religion on society.

Many of these indicators have become basic and standard measurements of the state of organized religion in the U.S.

The report will also present a detailed analysis of church attendance and membership by key population groups and by major faiths and denominations. Because no other organization regularly measures America's churchgoing habits, the Gallup Poll has lent its fact-finding service for this purpose.

Also included are demographic profiles of major faiths and denominations, as well as changes in religious preference and identification.

Long-term trends will be charted, and a special commentary by George Gallup, Jr. will explore the interaction of religion and society over the last five decades.

Here are four important reasons why these annual reports on religion in America have proved so popular:

1. They are an invaluable source of information on religious beliefs and practices in the U.S. and abroad, much of which is not available elsewhere.

2. They provide national and regional norms against which the clergy can match their own churches and synagogues in terms of religious belief, practice, knowledge and stewardship.

3. They provide new and exciting information that can be developed into sermons or articles on the state of religion.

4. They provide data indispensable for future planning: What are the new religious interests of church members and non-members? Where does the public think churches are falling short?

HOW TO ORDER

RELIGION IN AMERICA, 1985 can be ordered from The Gallup Organization, Inc. P.O. Box 310, Princeton, New Jersey 08542. The cost of the 1985 report is \$25.00.

EMERGING TRENDS is published monthly except July and August by the PRINCETON RELIGION RESEARCH CENTER. The Center, founded in 1977, is an inter-faith non-denominational research organization with headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey. The PRRC specializes in creative, actionable research, utilizing the worldwide attitudinal and behavioral facilities of Gallup International. The purpose of the PRRC is to gain a better understanding of the nature and depth of religious commitment in the U.S. and abroad and to explore ways this information can enable religious leaders to promote spiritual growth. A one year subscription can be obtained for \$30; inquire: Publications Department, P.O. Box 310, 53 Bank Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08542 (Telephone: 609/924-9600) PLEASE NOTIFY US OF ADDRESS CHANGE.

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Moderate Upturn In Those Who Say Religion Increasing Influence

PRINCETON, N.J. — A total of 48% of Americans today say religion is increasing its influence on American life, compared to 39% who say religion is losing its impact, representing a moderate upturn in those who hold the former opinion.

Following is the question that has been asked in 17 surveys since 1957:

At the present time, do you think religion as a whole is increasing its influence on American life or losing its influence?

Following is the full trend. The proportions saying "the same" or "no opinion" are excluded.

INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON AMERICAN LIFE

	Increasing %	Losing %
1985.....	48	39
1984.....	42	39
1983.....	44	42
1981.....	38	46
1980.....	35	46
1978.....	37	48
1977.....	36	45
1976.....	44	45
1975.....	39	51
1974.....	31	56
1970.....	14	75
1969.....	14	70
1968.....	18	67
1967.....	23	57
1965.....	33	45
1962.....	45	31
1957.....	69	14

The following table shows the changes by groups

between 1970, when only 14% said religion was increasing its influence, and today, when 48% do so. As seen, perceptions differ little by groups, in both the 1970 and 1985 surveys.

PERCENT SAYING RELIGION INCREASING INFLUENCE

	1985 %	1970 %	Increase
NATIONAL.....	48	14	34 points
Men.....	47	13	34
Women.....	48	14	34
18-29 years.....	49	14	35
30-49 years.....	49	13	36
50 & older.....	45	15	30
Protestants.....	51	14	37
Catholics.....	43	13	30

- DETAILS OF SURVEY -

The latest findings are based on in-person interviews with 1,571 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period March 8-11.

For results based on the full sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects could be 3 percentage points in either direction. The margin of error is larger for the demographic sub-samples.

In addition to sampling error, the reader should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties encountered in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls. These statements conform to the standards of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

Belief Jesus Is God Holds Firm

Despite the momentous events and social upheavals of the last three decades, belief that Jesus Christ is God has held firm, with 7 in 10 stating this belief.

The latest figure of 70%, recorded in a 1983 survey, compares with 72% in 1965 and 74% in 1952.

Other Gallup surveys in recent decades show a slightly higher proportion — 8 in 10 — believing that Jesus was divine — that, at least in some respects, we find the reality of God in Jesus Christ.

Beliefs about Jesus Christ's divinity range from those who believe he was in fact God living among men (approximately half of those who believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ hold this belief), believe that he was only a man but was called by God to reveal God's purpose to the world, believe he was divinely *inspired*, and finally to those who believe he was divine but only in the sense that he embodied the best that is in all men.

While as many as 8 in 10 believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ in some respect, far fewer — 6 in 10 — indicate they are strongly convinced of his divinity. Similarly, 8 in 10 say they believe that Jesus rose from the dead (physically or spiritually), but closer to 6 in 10 express the certainty that he did so.

Approximately 2 in 10 do not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ or do not express an opinion. Included are those who think Jesus Christ was a great religious leader but not divine, believe that one cannot know the answer, think Jesus Christ did not live, or give their religious preference as non-Christian.

In chronological order, here are the Gallup findings on the divinity of Jesus Christ:

Do you believe that Jesus Christ ever actually lived? Do you think he was God, or just another leader like Mohammed or Buddha?

	1952	1965	1983
	%	%	%
God	74	72	70
Another religious leader	12	14	11
Son of God, other	3	3	6
Don't know	7	7	4
Jesus never lived	1	1	2
Don't know whether			
Jesus lived	3	3	7
	100%	100%	100%

(The 1983 results are from a survey conducted for the Robert Schuller Ministries. The 1965 and 1952 findings are from surveys conducted for the Catholic Digest, by Ben Gaffin and Associates and The Gallup Organization.)

Which one of these statements comes closest to describing your beliefs about Jesus? (Schuller, 1/83)

Jesus was divine in the sense that he was in fact God living among men.	42%
Jesus was divine in the sense that while he was only a man, he was uniquely called by God to reveal God's purpose in the world	27
Jesus was divine in the sense that he embodied the best that is in all men	9
Jesus was a great man and teacher, but I would not call him divine	6
Frankly, I'm not entirely sure there really was such a person	2
No opinion.	14
	100%

Please tell me if you feel the following statement is completely true, mostly true, mostly untrue, or completely untrue: "I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ." (Gallup Poll, 12/81)

Completely true	60%	} 85%
Mostly true	25	
Completely untrue	5	} 9
Mostly untrue	4	
No opinion		6
		100%

What do you believe about Jesus Christ — do you think Jesus Christ was God, another religious leader like Mohammed or Buddha, or do you think Jesus Christ never actually lived? (Unchurched American, 4/78)

God	44%
Another leader	13
Son of God	34
Never actually lived	1
Other	2
No opinion.	6
	100%

Do you believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, or not? (Unchurched American, 4/78)

Believe	82%
Don't believe	9
No opinion.	9
	100%

Here's another kind of question about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. You notice that the numbers on this card go from zero, meaning absolute certainty that Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, up to ten, meaning absolute certainty that Jesus Christ did rise from the

Continued on page 3

dead. To indicate how you feel, would you select a number between zero and ten – the lower the number, the less certain you are that Jesus Christ rose from the dead; the higher the number, the more certain you are. (Unchurched American, 4/78)

Rating	
10	64%
9	5
8	6
7	3
6	3
5	6
4	1
3	1
2	1
1	1
0	5
No opinion	4
	100%

Have you ever received Jesus Christ? (Gallup Youth Survey of teenagers, 2/78)

Yes	60%
No	39
Don't know	1
	100%

Which one of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about Jesus Christ? (Christianity Today, 11/78)

	Public %	Clergy %
Jesus Christ was a man, but was divine in the sense that God worked through Him; He was the son of God	57	12
Jesus Christ is not God or the son of God, but was a great religious teacher	11	1
Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man	26	87
No opinion	6	*
	100%	100%

*Less than 1%.

Do you believe that Jesus Christ was the son of God, or do you think he was instead just a religious leader like Muhammed or Buddha? (Dayton, Ohio survey of young adults, 18-29, 1976)

Son of God	75%
Religious leader	15
No opinion	10
	100%

Do you believe in the Resurrection – that is, in the rising of Jesus Christ from the dead? (Dayton, Ohio survey of young adults, 18-29, 1976)

Believe	75%
Don't believe	15
No opinion	10
	100%

Which one of these statements comes closest to describing your beliefs about Jesus? (Redbook Magazine 1963)

He is God's son, born of the Virgin Mary	82%
He is God's son, but the story of the Virgin Birth is probably a myth	6
He is divine, but only as we all are	2
He was a great moral teacher and an unusually good man, but not divine	6
No opinion	4
	100%

GROWING NUMBER ACKNOWLEDGE OVERINDULGENCE IN ALCOHOL

A growing number of U.S. adults admit they sometimes drink more than they should, with 32% of drinkers in a recent survey acknowledging they at least occasionally overindulge, compared to 23% in 1978 and 18% in 1974.

The new survey also shows the proportion who say drinking has been a cause of trouble in their families remaining at a high level. Currently, 21% cite drinking as a family problem, compared to 18% in a July 1984 survey. The latest figure is nearly double the 12% recorded in 1974.

Currently, 2 Americans in 3 (67%) drink alcoholic beverages. In last year's survey, the figure was 64%.

Many Would Like To Cut Down Or Quit

Many drinkers would like either to cut down their drinking (14%) or quit entirely (2%). Among those who say they sometimes drink too much, 31% plan to cut down and 4% plan to quit. The main reasons given include health and diet considerations, expense, overindulgence, hangovers, advice of others, and the fact that drinking interferes with work and other activities.

Nine in 10 (93%) of those who plan to cut back or quit think they will be successful, but 6% are not sure whether or not they will succeed and 1% feel they will fail.

61% Say Religion Can Answer All Or Most Of Today's Problems

Six in 10 Americans believe religion can answer all or most of today's problems while only 1 person in 5 clearly doubts the relevance of religion in the modern world.

In a recent Gallup Poll, 61% of the public say that religion can provide answers for contemporary problems, 22% feel it is "largely old-fashioned and out of date," and 17% do not express an opinion.

When this question was first asked, in 1957, 81% of the public expressed faith in religion's ability to provide answers for contemporary problems while merely 7% felt it was out of date.

In each of the six Gallup surveys in which this question has been asked, women, persons with less than a high school education, and residents of the Midwest and South have been most apt to believe in religion's relevance.

The change since 1984 has been most pronounced among woman and younger adults.

QUESTION AND TREND

Following is the question asked to determine the public's views on the relevance of religion to modern problems:

Do you believe that religion can answer all or most of today's problems, or that religion is largely old-fashioned and out of date?

Here is a comparison of the latest findings with those recorded in the earlier surveys:

CAN RELIGION ANSWER PROBLEMS?

	Can answer	Out of date	No opinion
	%	%	%
1985	61	22	17
1984	56	21	23
1982	60	22	18
1981	65	15	20
1974	62	20	18
1957	81	7	12

The following table compares the percentages in various population groups who currently believe religion can answer today's problems with the percentages who held this opinion in earlier surveys:

CAN RELIGION ANSWER PROBLEMS?

(Percent responding affirmatively)

	1957	1974	1981	1982	1984	1985
	%	%	%	%	%	%
NATIONAL	81	62	65	60	56	61
18-20 years	84	55	58	58	52	62
30-49 years	80	64	60	58	55	59
50 and older	79	66	73	63	60	63
Protestants	83	70	72	71	66	70
Catholics	83	58	64	53	48	52
College education	78	52	57	53	53	55
High school	83	63	67	63	55	63
Grade school	79	73	77	63	64	66
Men	75	54	58	53	54	54
Women	86	70	71	66	59	67

The latest findings are based on in-person interviews with 1,571 adults, 18 and older, conducted in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period March 8-11.

APPEAL OF LARGE FAMILIES IS LOWEST IN 50 YEARS

The appeal of large families continues to decline, with merely 11% in a recent Gallup Poll saying the ideal number of children in four or more. This is the smallest proportion favoring families of this size since Gallup began recording the public's preferences in 1936. As recently as 1968, 41% felt the ideal American family would include four children or more.

In the current survey, a 56% majority believes the model number of children is two, while 21% prefer three, 4% one, and 2% none. Two-child families have been preferred since the early 1970's.

Religious Differences Disappear

Roman Catholics historically have favored larger families than have Protestants: In the 1968 survey, for instance, 50% of Catholics, compared to 37% of Protestants, cited four or more children as the ideal. Now, however, statistically identical proportions of Catholics (9%) and Protestants (10%) share this view.

Teens Decry Media Use Of Sex And Violence

A majority of teenagers criticize the job that is being done to limit the amount of sex and violence being shown on movie and TV screens, according to the latest Gallup/AP Youth Survey.

Movies with excessive portrayals of sex and violence usually are rated "R" or "X," but Gallup Youth Surveys in recent years have consistently shown that most teens have seen R-rated and X-rated movies, and more recently, have been viewing adult fare on cable television. (Note: X-rated movies are not shown on cable.) What they have seen apparently is excessive, in their opinion.

Only 1 teen in 20 (5%) believes that film makers are doing an excellent job in limiting the amount of sex or violence shown on the silver screen. Some teens think they are doing a good job in limiting violence (32%) or sex (25%); but 61% rate the film makers only fair or poor in limiting *violence*, while 68% give them negative grades in limiting *sexual* content.

Negative opinion of film makers is greater among young women than among young men, with low ratings given by 75% of young women on limiting sex and by 65% concerning the amount of violence being shown in the movies.

Cable television has become an important alternative source of teen movie viewing, but the teens are even more negative about the job being done by cable operators. Based on those teens who have viewed cable television and can give opinions about it, 78% express negative opinions regarding its sexual content and 65% give a fair or poor rating for its failure to limit the amount of violence that is shown.

Broadcast television is doing a comparatively better job in the eyes of teens in curtailing sex and violence. Six in 10 young men (62%) say the people in broadcast television are doing an excellent or good job in limiting the amount of sex shown, but 56% of the young women say the job being done is only fair or poor. A bare majority of 51% of the young men hold positive attitudes toward the TV producers concerning their efforts to limit violence, but 6 in 10 young women (60%) say a good job is not being done.

Some adult critics have expressed concern about the sexual orientation and depictions of violence in music videos, but teens are comparatively less critical of the new musical medium. Majorities of young men say the rock video producers are doing an excellent or good job in limiting the amount of sex (55%) or violence (54%) that is being shown. Young women, however, disagree, with majorities believing a good job is *not* being done to limit the amount of sex (58%) or violence (51%) depicted in music videos.

Here is how the questions were asked:

For each of the following – movies, broadcast television, cable television, music videos – please tell me

if you think the people who make them are now doing an excellent, good, fair or poor job in limiting the amount of violence (amount of sex) shown.

The findings are based on telephone interviews with a representative cross section of 500 teenagers, 13 through 18, conducted from July through September 1984.

23% OF AMERICANS ARE VOLUNTEERS FOR CHURCHES, RELIGIOUS GROUPS

One-fourth of Americans (23%) do voluntary work for churches or religious organizations, a higher proportion than recorded in 13 other nations.

Following is the full list, based on surveys conducted by The Gallup Organization and Gallup International Research Institutes (GIRI) for the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), Washington D.C. and the European Values System Study Group (1981):

DO VOLUNTARY WORK

United States	23%
Northern Ireland	14
Spain	10
Netherlands	9
Republic of Ireland	8
Great Britain	7
West Germany	7
Norway	6
Belgium	5
Italy	5
Sweden	5
Finland	4
France	3
Denmark	2

INTERESTED IN CONDUCTING A SURVEY IN YOUR CHURCH ?

A growing number of priests, ministers, and rabbis have expressed interest in conducting surveys of their congregations and/or local communities.

If you share this interest and would like expert help and advise, we suggest you contact Russell D. Bredholt, Continental Research Associates, 1385 Yellow Pine Court, Winter Springs, Florida 32708. Telephone: (305) 365-4321. Continental Research Associates is affiliated with the Princeton Religion Research Center.